

The Commonwealth Readiness Project Leadership Council Interim Update January 15, 2008

Introduction

The combined challenge of calling for improvement to a leading education system and developing a strategic plan with a ten-year horizon is significant. However, through our own work and professional experience, we know that while national leadership in education is necessary, it is no longer sufficient. National leadership will not ensure the lifelong success of individuals, the vitality of communities nor the economic strength of our state. For Massachusetts to move forward in education we must ensure that every student is provided the best possible opportunity to reach his or her potential and that our system is globally competitive.

The standards-based reform that has been at work in the Commonwealth since 1993 has yielded significant results. The standards and expectations for students in every school in every neighborhood are clear. And many students throughout the Commonwealth are meeting those standards. Nevertheless, while our aim is for all children to meet and exceed the standards and expectations we have set, pernicious achievement gaps persist. Throughout our schools, African-American and Hispanic student performance lags far behind performance of White and Asian students.¹ In addition, too many students – including those who have earned their competency determination by passing MCAS and local graduation requirements - must take remedial math and English courses to handle college-level work.² Massachusetts colleges and universities are graduating too few students with degrees in critical fields including math and science³ and all the while, the cost of attending the Commonwealth's public higher education institutions continues to rise.⁴

¹ MCAS scores for 2007: 91 percent of White students passed both exams on their first try, as did 90 percent of Asian students, compared to only 73 percent of Black students, and 67 percent of Hispanic Students. "Statewide MCAS Results Show Unprecedented Improvement in All Grades." 12 Sept. 2007. Massachusetts Department of Education. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.asp?id=3668>>.

² Thirty-seven percent of incoming freshmen from public high schools were required to take a remedial course in reading, writing, or math in 2004. "Creating a Massachusetts High School Curriculum for College and Career Readiness." 7. Massachusetts Department of Education. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/hsreform/masscore/bg.doc>>.

³ As a share of all Massachusetts college graduates, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors have declined by 2 percent between 1993 and 2007; meanwhile, STEM majors, as a share of college graduates, increased by 0.7 percent nationwide. Conaway, Carrie. "Supply and Demand of STEM Workers." Oct. 2007. Massachusetts Department of Education. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/research/reports/1007stem.doc>>.

⁴ From the 2001-2002 school year to the 2002-2003 school year, tuition and mandatory fee charges at public institutions in Massachusetts rose between 11-24 percent - the largest increase in the nation. Trombley, William. "The Rising Price of Higher Education." Winter 2003. The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. 15 Jan. 2007. <http://www.highereducation.org/reports/affordability_supplement/affordability_1.shtml>.

Massachusetts employers are struggling to find employees with the academic content expertise needed for high growth jobs in the state. Of the 92,640 jobs vacancies in the Commonwealth, 38% require an associate's degree or better.⁵ The analysis of the 92,640 job vacancies shows that almost 53% of the 30,000-plus "persistent"⁶ job openings (new jobs) require an associate's degree or better.⁷ Employers consistently report a shortage of potential employees who possess fundamental skills and competencies needed in every field. From the ability to communicate and collaborate effectively and the capacity to be self-motivated and directed, to understanding the culture and etiquette of a work place environment, employers report that those entering the workforce are not ready.

The Next Era of Education Improvement

Massachusetts is not the only state that recognizes the need to push its system of public education forward to meet the demands of a world economy and global society.⁸ Massachusetts does, however, stand at the leading edge of these efforts. We have a strong foundation upon which to build. In addition, our state's elected leaders as well as the state's business leaders, the academic community and increasingly the residents in communities across the state share a common objective: creating the best possible opportunities for economic, social and civic success for individuals, communities and the Commonwealth.

The Governor has called upon the Commonwealth Readiness Project to look to the future and offer a strategic plan for a comprehensive, integrated, student-centered education system that begins before kindergarten and continues through grade 12 and beyond. The Governor's specific charge

⁵ "Massachusetts Job Vacancy Survey: Hiring Trends by Industry and Occupation." 4th Quarter 2006. 15. Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/pdf/JobVac2006Q4.pdf>>.

⁶ "Persistent" vacancies represent jobs that require skill and create a volume of vacancies that are consistently reported in the Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development's Massachusetts Job Vacancy Survey.

⁷ Internal, unpublished analysis by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.

⁸ For example, New York's recent action plan for reform aims to: increase the number of children participating in Pre-K programs by 100,000, representing 75% of the estimated number of unserved children; make online professional development courses available to all teachers (such as the PBS TeacherLine NY and NYS Virtual Learning System); create standards-aligned content with teacher guides, extensive online library resources, and interactive flexibility to fit classroom needs; and work with the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and other stakeholders to develop a preliminary Children's Mental Health Plan to coordinate services, identify and disseminate best practices, collect data and report across systems, build a qualified and adequately trained workforce, and identify required appropriations to implement. "P-16 Education: A Plan for Action." November 2006. University of the State of New York, New York State Board of Regents, State Education Department. <<http://usny.nysed.gov/summit/p-16ed.htm>>.

to the Readiness Project is to focus not on those things that will bring incremental improvement but rather, on those things that will bring dramatic, widespread improvement.

A clear vision and a comprehensive strategic plan that focuses first on what students need to succeed – whether those needs exist within school walls or beyond – and then on improving the fundamental, systemic levers that will facilitate that success will ensure that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts continues to be a center of excellence in education.

Characteristics: The Commonwealth's Education System in 2018

Based on the work of the Readiness Project to date, all Massachusetts stakeholders – public and private – must begin working together now to create and invest in a public education system that will, 10 years from now, be distinguished by the following characteristics.

- Children and families in need are identified early and experience a continuum of service throughout the education pipeline and into the adult world to maximize return on taxpayer investments.
- From the earliest age, all children receive high-quality early education and care that readies them socially, emotionally and academically to successfully enter kindergarten.
- Education and human services are strongly and deliberately linked to provide a seamless network of support that nurtures and develops those children in need through each critical phase of development.
- All students with an equal opportunity for a high-quality, challenging and engaging educational experience that results in significantly improved graduation and college completion rates.
- Standards, curriculum, assessments, professional development, learning environments and accountability all aligned to focus appropriately on rigorous academic content, 21st century skills, and emerging career opportunities.

- A robust and effective system of state support and assistance pre-K through higher education that is aligned with and linked to a comprehensive accountability system that generates continuous improvement in teaching, learning and educational leadership.
- An effective human resource strategy for training, recruiting, hiring, and supporting educators with exemplary content knowledge, proven pedagogical skills, and the capacity, training, time and support to reach and teach each student.
- Public schools, higher education institutions, businesses and private and community organizations in bold, long-term partnerships to enrich teaching, learning and the transfer of real-world skills and competencies.
- Opportunities for all students to earn an associate's degree or the equivalent to ensure they are job and career ready as well as civic-minded and engaged in their communities and their world.
- Accessible and affordable opportunities for all at the Commonwealth's public colleges and universities.
- Through unprecedented cooperation and collaboration between and among public and private institutions, businesses and communities, the Commonwealth is known worldwide as THE destination for higher education -- public and private -- no matter a student's area of interest, field of study or age.

Focus Areas for Action

The primary goal of the Commonwealth Readiness Project is to develop a blueprint for state action that will facilitate sweeping rather than incremental change in education. Tasked with offering recommendations that will generate improvement to fundamental elements of the state education system, the Readiness Project has already identified several preliminary focus areas for immediate action.

These focus areas are but three elements of the comprehensive system we envision. We highlight them here because they are not only touchstones for the future, but they also warrant attention and investment now:

1. Early education and care;
2. Expanded teaching and learning time; and
3. Student progression from high school to higher education, work and society.

1. Early Education and Care

Massachusetts is the only state in the nation that has a state department with the combined mission of providing and coordinating a range of services and assistance that address early childhood

High-Quality: The Key to High Impact (Figure 1)

- Research indicates that low-income children who participate in high-quality early childhood education are 40% less likely to need special education services or be held back a grade; 30% more likely to graduate from high school; and twice as likely to go to college.
- In Massachusetts, a study examining the return on investment from high quality education to society found that for every \$1 spent on two years of high-quality pre-kindergarten, Massachusetts would recoup at least \$1.18 in savings and additional revenue.

education and early childhood care. Entering its third year of operation, the Department has made significant progress. Now, however, the arguably tougher and surely more complex, long-term challenge is to provide universal access to high-quality, affordable early education and care. The short-term challenge is to accelerate the state's commitment and investment so that a new generation of pre-kindergartners enters school ready to learn.

The Commonwealth is off to a strong start with a majority of its young children enrolled in a formal early education and care program.⁹ However, only a fraction of the state's pre-kindergartners have access to an accredited program¹⁰ and only 28% of center-based preschool classrooms have at least one teacher who holds a bachelor's degree or higher in the field.¹¹ There

⁹ Roughly 70% of the Commonwealth's 240,000 preschool-aged children are enrolled in a formal early education and care program. "Momentum Grows: Early Education in Massachusetts." 3 Jan. 2008. Early Education for All, Strategies for Children. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/eea/6research_summaries/07_MAMomentum.pdf>.

¹⁰ "A Report on the Cost of Universal, High-Quality Early Education in Massachusetts." Fall 2006. 11. Early Education for All. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/eea/1publications/0610_RAWG_Report.pdf>.

¹¹ Marshall, Nancy L., Julie Dennehy, Christine Johnston-Staub, and Wendy Wagner Robeson. "Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief: Characteristics of the Current Early Education and Care Workforce Serving 3-5 Year Olds." 2005. 10. Center for Research on Women, Wellesley College. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.wcwoonline.org/proj/earlycare/workforcefindings9-9-05.pdf>>.

is, then, much work yet to do. For it is “high-quality” early education and care programs – those that are accredited and are led by educators with at least a bachelor’s degree -- that are the goal. High-quality programs deliver the social, emotional and academic benefits children need and bring taxpayers a high rate of return on investment.

Complicating the need for high-quality programs is the equally important need for affordable programs. Massachusetts is the fourth least affordable state in the nation for full time pre-kindergarten.¹² While families in Massachusetts can apply for subsidies if their income is less than 50% of the State Median Income (SMI), they remain eligible only as long as their income does not exceed 85% of the SMI.

Massachusetts is Ready for Universal Pre-K (Figure 2)

- Eighty-five percent of Massachusetts families with pre-school aged children express interest in enrolling their preschool-aged child in a free high-quality early education program.
- Seventy-seven percent of Massachusetts voters support increased public funding for early childhood education, while 88% agree that all children should have access to high-quality early education.

In response to these challenges, the Commonwealth launched the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (MA UPK) pilot program in fiscal year 2007. Administered by the Department of Early Education and Care, the MA UPK program in FY07 has provided 131 grants, which serve 3,002 children in 62 cities and towns.¹³ Current funding for the program is \$7.1 million. An immediate, significant increase in the state’s investment in this program would keep Massachusetts moving toward its goal of providing every young child with the strong start that UPK can provide.

2. Expanded Teaching and Learning Time

Here in the Commonwealth, we continue to collectively confine our capacity to provide school children with what we know they need by adhering to an agrarian school schedule that is out of sync with the realities of life at this time in history.

¹² Average annual fee paid for a full-time center care for a year-year old in Massachusetts is \$10,668. Nationally the average cost ranges from \$3,794 - \$10,920. “2007 Child Care in the State of Massachusetts.” Feb. 2007. National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.naccrra.org/randd/data/docs/MA.pdf>>.

¹³ “Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Pilot Grant Program.” May 2007. Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/FinalUPK9_12_07.pdf>.

Children no longer need to be dismissed from the school day and the school year in time to plant, harvest and otherwise tend to farm chores. They need to be in safe, supervised, rich teaching and learning environments that correspond better to the schedules of today's working parents. And they need more time to not only master a scope and sequence of academic content in a range of core subjects, but also master a range of skills and competencies that will ready them for work and life in a world economy and global society. Equally important, they need to experience an education rich in cooperative and collaborative activities, creativity and the arts.

As we approach a new era of education improvement, comprehensively addressing the issue of the time we provide for teaching and learning is paramount. With more time, teachers and students have a better chance to achieve all that our high expectations require and that the world economy demands.

School & Work: Time Out of Sync (Figure 3)

- Thirty-one percent of children in MA working families are "latchkey children."
- In MA, between 1980 and 2000 employment rates of married mothers increased 16 percentage points, from 62 to 78 percent while single mothers' employment rates increased by 15 percentage points, from 65 to 80 percent.
- Over the past two decades, two-parent families increased their total working hours by 14 percent. Today these families work an average of 3,800 hours, nearly the equivalent of two full time jobs.

Expanded teaching and learning time, whether through full-day kindergarten, longer school days, summer learning programs or high-quality out-of-school or after-school programs, can provide increased opportunities that impact academic achievement, address out-of-school factors, such as health and nutrition and enhance support services including in-home resources and parenting skills. In fact, data from 73 after school studies concluded that after school programs using evidence-based approaches to improving students' personal and social skills were consistently successful in producing multiple benefits for youth including improvements in children's personal, social and academic skills as well as self-esteem.¹⁴

In addition, data recently released by Mass2020, the leading non-profit organization advancing expanded learning time in the

¹⁴Viadero, Debra. "Social-Skills Programs Found to Yield Gains in Academic Subjects." Education Week. 19 Dec. 2007: 1, 15. <<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/12/19/16social.h27.html>>

Commonwealth and nationally, demonstrates that expanded teaching and learning time is making a positive difference for students.¹⁵ By reforming the length and structure of the school day, the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time (ELT) initiative is helping not only to improve the learning environment in schools, but also student achievement.

More Time; Better Results (Figure 4)

- Across the three MCAS subject areas (Math, English Language Arts and Science), students in ELT schools achieved greater gains in proficiency as compared to students in the same schools in previous years.
- In addition, ELT students narrowed the achievement gap at a greater rate than the state, increasing the percentage of students at or above proficiency in ELA by 10.8% compared to the state's narrowing of only 3.5%.
- The number of ELT schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) grew 100% in math with six out of ten ELT schools making AYP in math this year and 40% in English.

From this combination of trend and results data, it is clear that substantial investments to expand teaching and learning time now will not only help to improve student performance today, but will better position families, communities and the Commonwealth for a stronger tomorrow.

It is time not only to adjust the public school schedule to meet the demands of today's world, but also to support working families. By providing a comprehensive expanded teaching and learning time system that includes accessible, affordable, culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate programs that include before school, after school, vacation, inclement weather, and summer programs, Massachusetts will continue to lead the way forward in public education.

3. Student Progression from High School to Higher Education, Work and Society

Massachusetts cannot and will not successfully compete in the 21st century with educational expectations and approaches that are appropriate for the 20th century. The global nature of our economy demands that more students achieve at higher levels and across a

¹⁵ In a spring 2007 study conducted by Massachusetts 2020 of teachers in all 10 extended learning time schools, 70 percent of teachers responded that the overall impact of the longer schedule on student academic performance was positive. "Time for a New Day: Broadening Opportunities for Massachusetts Schoolchildren, Expanded Learning Time Initiative 2006-2007 Annual Report." Nov. 2007. Massachusetts 2020. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.mass2020.org/Final%20ELT%20Annual%20Report.pdf>>.

wider spectrum of domains than our current public education system is designed to provide.¹⁶

Not enough young people are graduating and not enough of those that do are prepared for higher education and the work place.¹⁷

Moreover, there exists stark disparity in achievement between wealthier communities and poorer ones as well as between White students and their African-American and Hispanic peers.¹⁸

Massachusetts faces a labor and skills shortage that threatens economic growth. In the Commonwealth today, there are more than 90,000 unfilled jobs. Thirty-five thousand of those jobs require an associate's degree or higher to fill. The number of unfilled jobs is expected to grow over

The Need is Clear (Figure 5)

- Eleven thousand students in MA drop out of high school each year. High school graduates with no post-secondary schooling paid \$1.64 in taxes for every dollar of transfers that they received. This ratio rose to 3.28 for those with 1-3 years of college, to 12.85 for those with a bachelor's degree, and to 24.29 for those with an advanced degree.
- Of the nearly 75,000 students in the class of 2006, only 80% who entered as freshmen graduated in four years.
- While the state's overall graduation rate surpassed the national average, minority students lagged behind the state average. Only 64% percent of African Americans, 57% of Hispanics, and 70% of Native Americans in the same cohort graduated.
- College freshmen too often require remediation in math and English.
- Upon graduation, 85% of MA public higher education students remain in the Commonwealth to work, yet business and industry leaders say those entering the work force are under-prepared for available jobs.

¹⁶ "The dramatic changes taking place in the U.S. economy jeopardize the economic future of students who leave high school without the problem-solving and communication skills essential to success in post-secondary education and in a number of high paying jobs in the economy." Levy, Frank and Richard Murnane. "Education and the Changing Job Market: An Education Centered on Complex Thinking and Communicating is a Graduate's Passport to Prosperity." Educational Leadership. Oct. 2004: 80-83. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

<http://www7.nationalacademies.org/bose/ICT%20Fluency_Ed_Leadership_Article.pdf>.

¹⁷ Forty-five percent of nearly 400 executives rate recently hired high school graduates as "deficient" in applied skills. Graduates are particularly lacking in written communication: writing memos, letters and complex technical reports clearly and effectively. "A State Leaders Action Guide for 21st Century Skills." July 2006. Partnership for 21st Century Skills. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/documents/stateleaders071906.pdf>>.

¹⁸ In the 2005 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALLS), Performance in Level 3 or higher is considered to be a minimum standard for success in the labor market. However, only 14% of Hispanic and 20% of Black adults scored at Level 3, compared to 30 percent of Asian and 41 percent of White adults. Kirsch, Irwin, Henry Braun, Kentaro Yamamoto, and Andrew Sum. "America's Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation's Future." Jan. 2007. Policy Evaluation and Research Center, Policy Information Center, Educational Testing Center. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.ets.org/Media/Education_Topics/pdf/AmericasPerfectStorm.pdf>.

the next ten years and more than double within two decades.¹⁹ In addition, among 30 democracies tracked by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the U.S. ranks ninth in entry rates into higher education, tenth in the production of bachelor's degrees, eighteenth in higher education graduation rates and ninth in adult literacy among 20 high-income nations.²⁰

The universal expectation must be that all Massachusetts residents achieve a post-secondary degree or equivalent credential coupled with a guarantee from the state of financial support to achieve that goal. This is not only critical to create opportunities for individual success, but for the success of our communities and the Commonwealth.

Communities with high dropout rates, low college enrollment rates and low college graduation rates represent our best opportunity for addressing labor and skill shortages, while lifting these communities economically. Success in this area will require dramatic improvements in the alignment of curriculum and teaching strategies between secondary schools and public colleges. It will also require new standards, assessments, and curricula, as well as a strong educator corps prepared and willing to embrace new instructional methods and professional development strategies. The goal is to make school more engaging as well as more rigorous for all students. This should incorporate vigorous school-to-career strategies and the connecting activities that integrate structured workplace learning into the curriculum.

To be an education leader ten years from now, Massachusetts must embrace a system of education that favors not the familiar, but rather what we know works for students of all ages. It must be a system with flexible boundaries, capable of providing each student with what he or she needs when he or she needs it.

This critical transition point requires a seamless education structure overseen by one individual who is capable of looking at the big

¹⁹ "Massachusetts Job Vacancy Survey: Hiring Trends by Industry and Occupation." 4th Quarter 2006. Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/pdf/JobVac2006Q4.pdf>>.

²⁰ Stokes, Peter J. "How Universities Can Transform and Adapt to a Changing Higher Education Environment." 27 Sept. 2007. Eduventures, Inc. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.ucea.edu/pdfs/regions/gp/UCEA_092607_Eduventures_Stokes.pdf>.

picture to improve connections between the various stages of a young person's education. The education governance language recently filed by the Governor will create this central point of coordination.²¹ Passage of this proposal, followed by sound investments, will facilitate coordination between secondary school and whatever comes next for a student, ensuring students have access to multiple pathways to attain a post-secondary degree, make a living wage and become active and participating citizens.

Conclusion & Next Steps

The Readiness Project Subcommittees have already begun their Phase II work. This work will be presented in our final report this spring. In it, we will offer specific action recommendations in a range of focus areas including but not limited to the three highlighted in this interim update. Our objective is to provide you and your Administration with a set of recommendations that is comprehensive and aligned and which positions the Commonwealth well to continue in its long-standing tradition as a leader in public education.

End Notes

Figure 1

"Investing in Early Education is Essential." Early Education for All, Strategies for Children. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/images/pdfs/Why%20Investing.pdf>>.

Reynolds, Arthur J., Judy A. Temple, Dylan L. Robertson, and Emily A. Mann. "Long-Term Effects of Early Childhood Intervention on Education Achievement and Juvenile Arrest: A 15-Year Follow-up of Low-Income Children in Public Schools." Journal of the American Medical Association. 285 (2001): 2339-2346. <<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/285/18/2339>>.

"Massachusetts Families' Preferences and Implementation of the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program." Sept. 2007. 1. Early Education for All, Strategies for Children. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.strategiesforchildren.org/eea/6research_summaries/07_ParentSurveyBrief.pdf>.

Figure 2

Strategies for Children, Public Opinion Survey

²¹ "An Act Reorganizing Certain Education Agencies." 10 Jan. 2008. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Office of the Governor. 15 Jan. 2008. <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=gov3terminal&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Key+Priorities&L2=World-Class+Education+-+The+Readiness+Project&L3=Related+Legislation&sid=Agov3&b=terminalcontent&f=legislation_legis_education_reorg&csid=Agov3>

Figure 3

"New Survey Data: Massachusetts Latchkey Kids from Working Families Vastly Outnumber Those in Afterschool Program." 24 Mar. 2005. 1. Afterschool Alliance. 15 Jan. 2008.
<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/press_archives/america_3pm/MA_NR2.pdf, March 2005>.

Fogg, Neeta, Paul Harrington, and Thomas A. Kochan. "The State of Working Families in Massachusetts." Jan. 2004. iv. Massachusetts Work-Family Council Initiative. 15 Jan. 2008.
<<http://web.mit.edu/workplacecenter/docs/WFI-WPS.pdf>>.

Figure 4

"Time for a New Day: Broadening Opportunities for Massachusetts Schoolchildren, Expanded Learning Time Initiative 2006-2007 Annual Report." Nov. 2007. Massachusetts 2020. 15 Jan. 2008.
<<http://www.mass2020.org/Final%20ELT%20Annual%20Report.pdf>>.

Figure 5

"The Fiscal Economic Consequences of Dropping Out of High School: Estimates of the Tax Payments and Transfers Received by Massachusetts Adults in Selected Educational Subgroups." Jan. 2007. Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University. 15 Jan. 2008.
<http://www.bostonpic.org/youth/youth_pdfs/CLMS_Dropout_Fiscal_Cost_16P.pdf>.

"Cohort 2006 Graduation Rates – State Results." Massachusetts Department of Education. 15 Jan. 2008.
<<http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/reports/gradrates/06state.html>>.

"Creating a Massachusetts High School Curriculum for College and Career Readiness." 7. Massachusetts Department of Education. 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.doe.mass.edu/hsreform/masscore/bg.doc>>.

"Report of the Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education: Investing in Our Future." Mar. 2005. Massachusetts Senate. 15 Jan 2008.
<http://www.mass.gov/legis/reports/public_higher_ed_taskforce_report.htm>.

**The Commonwealth Readiness Project
Leadership Council Interim Update
January 15, 2007**

Structure & Process

Subcommittees

The Readiness Project is comprised of the following thirteen subcommittees:

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ▪ Accountability & Assistance | ▪ Innovative Schools |
| ▪ Curriculum Alignment | ▪ Long-Term Financing |
| ▪ Early Education & Care | ▪ MCAS & Additional Assessments |
| ▪ Education & Technology | ▪ Public & Private Higher Education |
| ▪ Expanded Teaching & Learning Time | ▪ Recruiting & Retaining Educators |
| ▪ High School Plus | ▪ UMass & Public Higher Education |
| | ▪ The Whole Child |

Combined, these Subcommittees have held more than 50 Subcommittee meetings and have heard presentations, conducted interviews and reviewed information from a range of state, federal and local education experts, practitioners and researchers. This work will continue through phase II of the project.

Public Meetings

The Readiness Project has held nine public meetings in nine communities across the state drawing input and advice from more than 550 additional Massachusetts residents.

The first three in a series of additional 2008 public meetings for the coming months will be held on January 17th at Brockton Public High School, January 28 at Blackstone Valley Regional Tech, and January 30 in Worcester (location TBD). For updates to the schedule, consult www.mass.gov.

Stakeholder Conversations, Briefings & Presentations

Dana Mohler-Faria, his office and Project Co-Chairs briefed and or presented information and updates on the Project to the following organizations or at the following events.

Administrators for Special
 Education, Statewide Conference
 Board of Early Education & Care
 Board of Education
 Board of Higher Education
 Bose Corporation
 Building the Future Workforce:
 Investments in Early Development
 and Education
 Cape & Islands Workforce
 Investment Board, Graduation
 Summit
 Cherish Every Child
 Citizens for Public Schools
 Council of Presidents, State
 Colleges of Massachusetts
 Dell Computer Corporation
 Diversity and Outreach in
 Mathematics and Engineering
 (DOME) Foundation
 Education Management Audit
 Council
 Harvard Graduate School of
 Education Roundtable
 Higher Education and Workforce
 Development Assembly
 Intel Corporation
 Leaders of Tomorrow
 Mass Insight
 Mass Jobs
 Mass Municipal Association
 Massachusetts Association of
 Early Education and Care, 7th
 Annual Management and
 Administration Conference
 Massachusetts Association of
 School
 Committees/Massachusetts
 Association of School
 Superintendents, Joint Conference

Massachusetts Business Alliance
 for Education
 Massachusetts Business
 Roundtable
 Massachusetts Educational
 Opportunity Association, Annual
 Conference
 Massachusetts Initiative on
 International Studies (MIIS)
 Massachusetts Office of Education
 Collaboratives
 Massachusetts Workforce
 Investment Board
 MassPartners in Education
 Metro South Chamber of
 Commerce
 National Governor's Association
 New Bedford Early Literacy
 Consortium
 New England Leadership Summit
 on College Readiness and
 Success
 New England Resource Center for
 Higher Education
 Southeastern Massachusetts
 Association of Student Councils
 The Davis Foundation
 Tri-County Superintendents
 Roundtable